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3 Keys to Healing ANY Marriage - from Dr. G - The Healing Marriage Community



The Healing
Marriage
Community
Desires to see
you:

- Re-envision life with your spouse,
- Connect with & lead your children,
- Deepen your marital-bed intimacy,
- Rediscover your relationship with God,
- Overcome & break addictions and strongholds
- Find your passion at work and/or change it, and
- Re-Ignite your life purpose.

Thanks for downloading this Guide.

My heart's desire is to see strong marriages, families, and lives lived with purpose that honor God.

I created a free Facebook community aimed to be a place of hope, healing, encouragement, and support. We were never meant to navigate life alone – and for some of us we feel very alone.

This Guide is meant to be a source of encouragement to you and your marriage. This is only the beginning. My work with individuals and families aims to re-ignite, restore, repair, and reinvigorate your marriage – and more.

Join my free Facebook group at www.facebook.com/groups/thehealthymarriage

Within this group we focus on these 7 important areas:

- Re-envision life with your spouse
- Connect with & lead your children
- Deepen your marital-bed intimacy
- Rediscover your relationship with God
- Overcome & break addictions and strongholds
- Find your passion at work and/or change it, and
- Re-ignite your life purpose.



Join in on the conversations and support today!

Let's start with these questions:

(For a more in depth dive check out
Dr. Chip Ingram's book "Marriage That Works" (2019))

As a couple, ask:

1. Who says, "Let's sit down and talk about this. Let's see what the Bible says about it. Maybe we need to spend some time praying about it"?
2. Who handles the money?
 - If the wife is managing money and writing checks, is she doing that as a function of her gifts or because her husband is neglecting his responsibility and leaving it to her?
3. Who disciplines the children when you are both at home?
4. Who initiates talking about problems, future plans, and areas to develop?
 - For example, how do you decide how many kids you want to have? What school they should go to? What kind of jobs you and your spouse should take? When you should retire? What the course of your life together will look like?
5. Who asks the most questions in your home and who gives the most statements?
 - Who is the one who is always asking what to do for dinner or about the decision you need to make about next week's plans?
 - Whichever person is asking those questions is the one who feels the weight of responsibility for them.

None of these questions are meant to prompt a legalistic standard in your marriage. Women will often see issues that men don't see, so they will naturally be the ones to bring them up first. There's nothing wrong with that. Many women are gifted with making plans and orchestrating schedules in ways that their husbands are not, so it is perfectly normal for them to contribute their gifts in those areas.

**The real question is:
Who is carrying the weight of
responsibility in the marriage?**



According to Chip Ingram's research, many women have to initiate discussion, make plans, and ask the big questions because their husbands do not. These men don't want to shoulder the responsibility for making life work. They let their wives carry the burden. When this happens, wives do not feel cherished, nurtured, and protected. In other words, they are not getting what God designed for their husbands to give them.

That is what these diagnostic questions are getting at, and if they reveal a pattern of neglect, some of the dynamics in the relationship need to change.

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HUSBANDS: How to Love Your Wife: Step Up.

Ephesians 5:33 calls men to "love their wives as they love themselves."

If marriage is a beautiful dance, and man needs to **step up** – in leadership and in love.



There are three specific ways to love your wife the Ephesians 5 way that will change the nature of your relationship:

- (1) **love her sacrificially,**
- (2) **love her intentionally,** and
- (3) **love her sensitively.**

Your wife and children will treasure your investment in them.

Sacrificial love endures the cost of the moment for the sake of the big picture.

Questions for Reflection & Discussion

What are some of the pitfalls and misunderstandings of the word “submission” in biblical descriptions of marriage?

How does the idea of mutual submission address these misunderstandings?

Why is the metaphor of dance such an effective picture of marriage?

What elements of a dance do you think helped clarify the roles of men and women most?

Why is clarity of roles important in marriage?

What happens when marriage partners are not clear about each of their roles?

If you are a man, which aspects of sacrificial love seemed most challenging to you?



If you are married, what immediate practical steps can you take to love your wife more sacrificially, intentionally, and sensitively?

If you are a woman, what attitudes and actions do you think will most help the man in your life grow into his role as the Bible defines it?

Why is this model of biblical leadership within marriage such a different paradigm from what most of us saw in our own homes growing up?

What forces today are working against us as we try to become the kind of man and that kind of husband?

How do we break the habits learned in the past to become the men we longed to be, the husbands our wives need us to be, and the models our children are desperate to see?

Tools for Becoming an Ephesians 5 Man – from Chip Ingram

“*The Daily Walk Bible*” is easiest and clearest Bible that provides context and understanding for those who don't know much about the Bible or who want to grasp the overall message and meaning.

“*True spirituality: Becoming a Romans 12 Christian*” is a book Chip Ingram wrote about his journey in understanding what it means to be a disciple of Christ and how to practically follow him in the five key relationships of our life.

“*The Five Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts*” by Gary Chapman is a perennial bestseller every man and woman should read if they haven't already.



Questions for Reflection & Discussion

In what ways have you seen the definition of manhood change during the course of your lifetime?

Think of one man you have looked up to as a model of manhood.

What characteristics does he have?

Where does he fit in the cultural evolution of masculine ideals?

How well do you think he embodies the biblical idea of manhood? Why?

In what ways, if any, have you experienced or witnessed absentee fatherhood?

What about passive fatherhood?

What effects of this phenomenon have you observed?

If you are a man, what is your response to the examples and research presented in this chapter?

Do they discourage you?
Confirm your beliefs?

Motivate you to make any changes? Why?

What next step do you sense God would have you take to become the man and husband he has designed you to become?

Who could help you on this journey?

What man or men would be willing to be a “band of brothers” with you as you move toward biblical manhood?

Is There a Woman in the House?

“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands and everything”
Ephesians 5:21-33

The questions to ask your spouse are,

“How can I make you more successful? How can I love you more deeply? How can I serve you well?”

Those questions fit under the umbrella of mutual submission. We are given a vivid picture of it in



Philippians 2:3-4.

“Do nothing from selfish or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.”

As unto Christ.

Ephesians 5:22-24

Submission does not mean saying, “Yes, dear,” to whatever your husband says. Scripture does not tell wives that they need to be passive. That is an extreme reaction to trying to be in control, and it goes too far in the opposite direction. A wife is to step into the marriage relationship – not step over her husband – with strength and respect. She is an equal partner. A partner who submits to the righteous leadership of the other partner – husband.

Equal standing, different roles.

R.E.S.P.E.C.T

Ephesians 5
“The wife must see to it that she respects her husband”
(v. 33).



The Greek word for “respect” in this verse comes from the root word “*phobos*,” from which we get our word “phobia,” but it doesn't have the same connotation. It means reverence, not fear.

Every man has a desperate need for his wife to step in and believe in Him.

Questions for Reflection & Discussion

How have abuses and distortions of the concept of submission made it difficult for a woman to function according to God's design?

In what ways does the context of mutual submission make a wife's submission to her husband more reasonable than many people assume?

In what ways does a wife's role meet her husband's needs?

What can a husband do to create a safe environment for his wife to fulfill her role?

If you are a woman, what is the most challenging aspect of your role as described by Ephesians 5?

What mental shifts would you need to make to trust God's process and your part in his choreography?

If you are a man, what changes do you need to make to help your wife step more fully into her role in the relationship

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Tools for Becoming an Ephesians 5 Woman – from Chip Ingram

- Read and meditate on God's word.
- Read Barbara Mouser's *Five Aspects of a Woman*, an in-depth study of biblical femininity.
- Check out the affirmation cards from the series that Teresa taught entitled "Precious in His Sight."
- Here are three regular practices that will help you become the woman God designed you to be:
 - a. Join with women to study God's Word and pray for one another.
 - b. Pray for your husband daily.
 - c. Pray for yourself. Ask according to Proverbs 31:12 that you would bring your husband good, not harm, all the days of your life.



Questions for Reflection & Discussion

In what ways do you think traditional definitions of womanhood have fallen short?

In what ways do you think modern definitions of womanhood have fallen short?

What are some of the challenges women face in modern Western culture?

If you are a woman, in what ways have you experienced tension between the desires for career and family?

How have you balanced those desires?

How would you answer the fundamental question of whether women's lives are better because of the “politically correct” experiments of recent times?

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Stepping Up as a Man: (1) Provide

“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever”
1 Timothy 5:8

Five financial objectives:

1. Do honest work
2. Honor God first
3. Live within your means
4. Prepare for the future
5. Train your children.



In a very real sense, your work is ultimately an act of worship.

Your core values as provider:

Feed your children more responsibility, in appropriate measures, so they become more independent from you and more dependent on God.

How you use money is just a symptom of a mindset, but it reflects your true values.

God actually commands us to celebrate and enjoy the good gifts he brings into our lives.

Questions for Reflection & Discussion

What was most helpful in this chapter?

Which of the five practices discussed in this chapter do you find come most naturally to you?

Which of the five practices do you sense need some additional attention or focus from you?

What's the biggest barrier or challenge you are facing in providing for your wife? Your family?

Who could help you take those next steps to provide for your family the way you want and need to.



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Stepping Up as a Man: (2) Protect.

Five Spiritual Objectives:

1. Set the pace personally.
2. Know the spiritual condition of your wife and children.
3. Pray for and with your wife and children regularly.
4. Ensure that biblical instruction takes place at home and at church.
5. Make experiencing God and loving each other your top priority.

Jesus said it best: “The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher” (Luke 6:40).

As husbands and fathers, we need to model following God’s will and repenting for missing it.

1 Peter 3:7
“Husbands
in the same way be considered as
you live with your wives
and treat them with respect as the
weaker partner and as heirs with
you of the gracious gift of life
so that nothing will hinder your
prayers.”

Sometimes we have to ask our wives, “How are you really doing?” and be prepared to really listen, not to try to fix whatever we hear.

Your family needs life, love, joy, and authentic experience. When they see this in your life, it spills over into theirs

Your core value as protector:

In fulfilling your spiritual responsibilities toward your wife and children, you want to do more than check all the boxes.

I think one of the best expressions of these values is in Philippians 4:8:

“Whatever is true,
whatever is noble,
whatever is right,
whatever is pure,
whatever is lovely,
whatever is admirable
– if anything is
excellent or
praiseworthy – think
about such things.”



Questions for Reflection & Discussion

What was the most helpful in this chapter?

Which of the five practices discussed in this chapter do you find come most naturally to you?

Which of the five practices do you sense needs some additional attention or focus from you?

What's the biggest barrier or challenge you are facing in protecting your wife?

Who could help you?



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Stepping Up as a Man: (3) Nurture

Five relational objectives:

1. Verbalize and celebrate the marriage Covenant.
2. Schedule time to develop marriage and family relationships
3. Provide structure and boundaries to ensure that family relationships take priority over outside demands.
4. Build communication into the fabric and rhythm of the family schedule.
5. Implement consequences fairly, firmly, and lovingly among all family members

Make it a goal to show outward signs of your commitment to your marriage.

Build a heart connection with every member of your family.



Your core values as nurturer:

The relational environment of your home needs to be filled with acceptance and affirmation given in the context of accountability.

Questions for Reflection & Discussion

How would you describe your ideal family environment?

In what ways are you encouraged with your role in leading your wife and family?

If you are a man, which leadership role do you find most challenging: financial provider, spiritual leader, or relational guide? Why?

In what ways do your responsibilities as a man require commitment and perseverance?

Who or what helps you strengthen your commitment?

In what ways has the chapter helped you understand the process of creating the family dynamics you want to experience?

What specific steps can you take now to move towards your goals for your marriage and family?



Who could you invite to join you on the journey for encouragement, strength, and accountability?

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What's a Woman to Do?

Three priorities.

The husband's first priority is to provide, then protect, then nurture. The wife's is first to nurture, then protect, then provide.

So the divine Designer has given **wives three priorities** in opposite order of their husbands':

1. To **nurture** is to create a relational environment that promotes the spiritual, emotional, and physical welfare of those around you.
2. To **protect** means to minimize the harmful influences that affect the lives that have been entrusted to you.
3. To **provide** means to maximize all spiritual, emotional, and physical, and financial resources to do good to those who are in your relational network.

Stepping In as a Woman: (1) Nurture

Five relational objectives:

1. Make time with God your number one priority.
2. Pray for your husband regularly.
3. Plan for him daily.
4. Prepare for him daily.
5. Protect your time with him.

The only way you can run a home as a transformational, loving environment is with God's help.

Proverbs 21:1,
"The king's heart is like a stream of water directed by the Lord; he guides it wherever he pleases."

If you have an issue with your husband, talk about it, make suggestions, and encourage him to read a book or listen to a podcast episode with you. If he does not listen, go to God in prayer. Ask God to get under your husband's skin and show him what he needs to know in order to lead his family well.



God longs to hear a wife and mother pray for her husband and children. He responds in very powerful ways.

You will find that whatever you invest in will grow, and whatever you neglect will eventually die.

Apart from your relationship with God, your marriage is the most important relationship you have.

Questions for Reflection & Discussion

What was most helpful?

Which of the five practices discussed do you find most come naturally?

Needs Attention, barriers?

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Stepping In as a Woman: (2) Protect

Five spiritual objectives:

1. Model dependency on Christ.
2. Pray for your children fervently.
3. Create structures and scheduled times that make family life a priority.
4. Teach your children how to live.
5. Make time for your children.

Luke 6:40
“Everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.”

When you model dependency on Jesus, you are painting a picture day by day of what truly matters.



- Teach your children to read, even before they begin school.
- Teach them to pray.
- Teach them – girls and boys – to cook.
- Teach them to listen well.

- Teach them to celebrate.
- Teach them to be generous.
- Teach them a craft, a musical instrument, a sport, or a skill that requires using their hands.
- Teach them how to speak in public.
- Teach them to resolve conflict.
- Teach them how to relax and not feel guilty.

Create a world in which you are not always going somewhere, accomplishing something, or listening to something.

Mentoring younger wives

Titus 2:3-5

Don't be overwhelmed by the role God has given you as a wife.

Questions for Reflection & Discussion

What was most helpful?

Which of the five practices discussed comes naturally needs?

Attention?

Barriers?

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Stepping In as a Woman: (3) Provide.

Sometimes the right choices are the hardest ones.

One study suggested that the average couple's income increases by only about 15% when they both work.

Questions for Reflection & Discussion

Why does a man need a champion on his side?

In what ways can a wife fulfill this role to nurture her husband?

Why are mothers so important in the lives of their children?

What do they provide for their children that no other person can provide?

Why do you think Scripture singles out the mentoring role for women in matters of marriage and family?

In what ways do you think this is needed in modern times?

If you are a woman, which of your three roles – nurturer, protector, or provider – do you find to be most challenging?

What do you need to do to overcome those challenges?

In what ways has this chapter helped you understand the process of creating the family dynamics you want to experience?

What specific steps can you take now to move toward your family goals?



Going through these exercises is just the first step in Healing and Building a Strong Christian marriage. Obviously, every situation is different, and what you actually need to DO based on your answers to these questions is something that there is NO “cookie-cutter” answer to.

Plus, you may still have questions like, “what if my partner is not on the same page or doesn’t think anything is wrong in our marriage?” and “what if my partner refuses to get help, how to I grow and make changes then?” If you’d like to get some personalizes help and want to discuss specifically what YOUR action plan should be, you can schedule a Free Consultation with me, Dr. Gilbert, by click [HERE](#).

**If you have questions want to
discuss these with
Dr. Gilbert,
feel free to book a consult with him at**

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